

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9230

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JOINT STATE-AID MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

REF: A. AIDTO CIRCULAR A-687

B. STATE 298250

C. LA PAZ 8928

### 1. PAST EXPERIENCE

WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FIND NO RECORD OF AN AID (OR PREDECESSOR AGENCY) PROJECT WHOSE PURPOSE WAS THE PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS UNDERSTOOD IN REF A AND ITS ATTACHMENTS. THE PROJECTS COMING CLOSEST TO HAVING SUCH A PURPOSE WERE, OR ARE, THE AIFLD PROGRAM, A PROJECT (NOW CONCLUDED) TO ACCELERATE THE GRANTING OF TITLES TO THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE BOLIVIAN LAND REFORM PROGRAM AND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM STARTED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PEACE CORPS AND CONTINUED UNTIL THE PRESENT WITH AID SUPPORT.

THE AIFLD PROGRAM, OF COURSE, SEEKS TO ASSIST IN THE ORGANIZATION OF BOLIVIAN WORKERS AND TO INCREASE THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE EFFICIENCY OF ASSERTING THEIR RIGHTS THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION. INDIRECTLY, THEREFORE, THE EXISTENCE OF AIFLD DEMONSTRATES USG SUPPORT FOR A FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY. IT HAS HAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOME SUCCESS IN PROVIDING A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE

PRINCIPLES AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF UNIONISM, BUT IT HAS NOT SOUGHT AGGRESSIVELY TO CULTIVATE STRONG SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND IT HAS NOT HAD THE EFFECT OF CHANGING THE BOLIVIAN ENVIRONMENT CONCERNING THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE PROJECT TO ACCELERATE THE GRANTING OF TITLES TO THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE BOLIVIAN LAND REFORM ACHIEVED PARTIAL SUCCESS, BUT DID NOT RESULT IN ANY CHANGE IN THE ATTITUDE OF THE GOB OR THE RURAL POPULATION TOWARD THE PROCEDURES INVOLVED IN ASSERTING TITLE TO LAND NOR IN ANY INCREASED AWARENESS OF THE RURAL POPULATION AS TO ITS RIGHTS UNDER THE BOLIVIAN LAND REFORM LAW.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM HAS FOSTERED THE CREATION OF VILLAGE LEVEL COMMITTEES, BUT THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEES HAS BEEN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONDUCT OF SMALL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIAL PROJECTS SUCH AS THE BUILDING OF SCHOOLS. THE PROGRAM HAS HAD CONSIDERABLE SUCCESS, AND THE VILLAGE COMMITTEES HAVE SHOWN THEMSELVES CAPABLE OF PETITIONING (BRINGING PRESSURE ON) THE GOB FOR ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. HOWEVER, THE COMMITTEES HAVE NOT BEEN A VEHICLE FOR THE EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE IMPROVEMENT OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN BOLIVIA DOES NOT DEPEND ON A CHANGE OF A PARTICULAR GOVERNMENT. RATHER, IT REQUIRES A CHANGE IN OPINIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE VARIOUS GROUPS THAT HAVE GOVERNED BOLIVIA DURING THE PAST 30 YEARS OR ARE LIKELY TO RULE IN THE FUTURE.

WE FIND NO REASON TO CONCLUDE THAT ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO BOLIVIA HAS HAD A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS. HOWEVER, WE ALSO DO NOT FIND ANY SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS FROM THE PAST ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES--PROBABLY DUE TO THE LACK OF AN ATTEMPT OF SUCH ASSISTANCE TO HAVE SUCH AN IMPACT.

## 2. CURRENT SITUATION

FOR A REVIEW OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RIGHTS IN BOLIVIA SEE REF C.

## 3. ADVISABILITY OF ATTEMPTING TO SUPPORT HUMAN RIGHTS IN BOLIVIA THROUGH AID PROGRAMS

WE BELIEVE THAT AN OVERT ATTEMPT TO USE THE AID PROGRAM AS A DIRECT LEVEL TO FORCE THE GOB TO MODIFY ITS ACTIONS RELATED TO THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS WOULD BE UNWISE. THE AID PROGRAM IS

NOT LARGE ENOUGH TO PROVIDE LEVERAGE FOR ANY DRAMATIC CHANGE; THE GOB IS TAKING MEASURES TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF ITS POPULACE; AND WE OBSERVE GRADUAL CHANGES TAKING PLACE BY THE GOB ON ITS OWN WHICH ARE LEADING TO A MORE FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN BOLIVIA. HOWEVER, WE ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER WAYS TO ASSIST THE GOB IN MAKING THESE GRADUAL CHANGES WHERE OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE IS FEASIBLE, DESIRABLE, AND ACCEPTABLE. WE HAVE NO OBJECT TO TRYING TO FOSTER A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AMONG THE GOVERNING CIRCLES.

UNDERTAKING OF SUCH ACTIVITIES WOULD, HOWEVER, NEED TO BE MORE CAREFULLY CONSIDERED THAN WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO AT THIS TIME AND, IF UNDERTAKEN, STRUCTURED WITH GREAT CARE TO AVOID FUTURE COMPLICATIONS WITH THE GOB. NONE OF THE FOLLOWING IDEAS HAS BEEN DISCUSSED WITH GOB AUTHORITIES. THEIR APPROVAL WOULD BE REQUIRED IN ADVANCE. FOR THE MOMENT, WE BELIEVE THE FOLLOWING ARE WORTH FURTHER CONSIDERATION:

A. FINANCING THE ATTENDANCE OF LEADING BOLIVIANS (INCLUDING MILITARY OFFICERS) AT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES DEDICATED TO DISCUSSING THE POSITIVE VALUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (NOT AT CHASTISING GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR FAILURES TO OBSERVE THEM FULLY) AND EVENTUALLY SPONSORING SUCH A CONFERENCE HERE.

B. FINANCING AN EFFORT BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TO INCLUDE IN ITS TEXTBOOK AND EDUCATION MATERIALS REFORM PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS OF CERTAIN SELECTED HUMAN RIGHTS (IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO INCLUDE THE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE CURRENT EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND INSTRUCTION MATERIALS PROJECT WITHOUT ADDITIONAL FUNDING).

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C. FINANCING AN EFFORT BY THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE TO INCLUDE IN ITS TRAINING PROGRAMS IN COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS OF CERTAIN SELECTED HUMAN RIGHTS (IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO INCLUDE THE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE SMALL FARMER ORGANIZATIONS PROJECT).

D. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE BOLIVIAN JUDICIARY AND TO THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE COULD IMPROVE THE EFFICIENCY OF THEIR OPERATIONS. THERE IS SOME REASON TO BELIEVE THAT MANY OF THE DEFECTS ARE CAUSED BY INEFFICIENCY RATHER THAN MALEVOLENCE.

E. ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS TO CERTAIN SELECTED HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES CAN BE GIVEN EXISTING AIFLD PROGRAMS. FOR EXAMPLE, COURSES EXPLAINING LEGAL SERVICES NOW ENJOYED BY MANY

UNIONS IN THE US AND ELSEWHERE COULD BE GIVEN.

DECONTROL FOLLOWING JANUARY 6, 1979.  
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